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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**
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Item 7 of the provisional agenda*
**Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee**

# Ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

**Note by the secretariat**

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# I. Introduction

1. The present report contains information relevant to the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Section II contains information on developments in the human rights regime, including the human rights treaty bodies, the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council. Section III relates to working methods of the Committee and other relevant issues. Section IV provides information on reports to be considered by the Committee at future sessions and on reports that have been received but not scheduled for consideration. A list of States that have not ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is contained in annex I to the present report. Annex II contains a list of States parties whose reports had been submitted but not yet considered or scheduled for consideration by the Committee as at 1 May 2014.

# II. Developments in the human rights regime

## A. Human rights treaty bodies

2. The Human Rights Committee held its 108th session from 8 to 26 July 2013, its 109th session from 14 October to 1 November 2013 and its 110th session from 10 to 28 March 2014. At its 108th session, the Committee adopted the guidelines on the independence and impartiality of members of the human rights treaty bodies (Addis Ababa guidelines) (A/67/222 and Corr.1, annex I) without amendment. At its 110th session, the Committee completed the first reading of its draft general comment on article 9 (Liberty and security of person) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The purpose of the general comment is to provide appropriate and authoritative guidance to States parties and other actors on the measures to be adopted to ensure full compliance with the rights protected under that provision.

3. At its fifty-first session, held from 4 to 29 November 2013, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights reaffirmed its decision to work on a general comment on the right to sexual and reproductive health. The Committee also discussed plans relating to future work on general comments. It was agreed that background research would be conducted for three potential general comments on article 15 (1) (b) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, State obligations in the context of corporate activities and the environment in the light of the Covenant and the right to development, respectively. Work on a general comment on article 7 of the Covenant on just and favourable conditions of work is under way.

4. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination held its eighty-third and eighty-fourth sessions from 12 to 30 August 2013 and from 3 to 21 February 2014. At its eighty-third session, the Committee adopted general recommendation No. 35 on combating racist hate speech, in which it underlined that effectively combating racist hate speech involved the mobilization of the full normative and procedural resources of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. At its eighty-fourth session, the

Committee held its fourth informal meeting with States parties. Attended by 62 States parties, the meeting was focused on recent improvements in working methods, including the list of themes and the resulting cost savings, the interactive dialogue, more focused concluding observations and the adoption of general recommendations No. 34 on racial discrimination against people of African descent and No. 35 on combating racist hate speech.

5. The Committee against Torture held its fifty-first session from 28 October to 22 November 2013. The Committee adopted a public statement on reprisals in which it recalled that, in accordance with article 13 of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, States parties were to refrain from reprisals against whoever sought to cooperate with the Committee by providing information. It also defined the measures to be taken by the Committee regarding reprisals. In particular, the Committee is to assess the situation, communicate with the complainants and with the authorities of the State party concerned, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Secretary-General in order to request the cessation of such acts, request one or more of its members to undertake a visit to the State party concerned, and also request local institutions, non-governmental organizations and representatives of United Nations country teams to make inquiries, and request the intervention of other relevant United Nations bodies and officials, including the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General. In addition to delineating possible common approaches with other human rights mechanisms such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the Committee established a working group on the matter.

6. The Committee on the Rights of the Child held its sixty-third session from 27 May to 14 June 2013 and its sixty-fourth session from 16 September to 4 October 2013. At the latter session, the Committee held a retreat to discuss child participation in its work, especially direct meetings between it and children during its pre-sessional working group.

7. The Committee on the Rights of the Child held its sixty-fifth session from 13 to 31 January 2014, during which it held a retreat to discuss the accountability of States parties for implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the importance of developing indicators to measure the efforts undertaken and the results achieved by States parties in three accountability areas (structure, process and outcomes) and to assist States parties in the reporting process. The Global Reference Group for Accountability to Children's Rights and Well-Being will develop GlobalChild, a monitoring tool for the Convention.

8. The Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families held its nineteenth and twentieth sessions from 9 to 13 September 2013 and from 31 March to 11 April 2014. At the latter session, the Committee held a day of general discussion on workplace abuse and exploitation and workplace protection.

9. The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities held its ninth, tenth and eleventh sessions from 15 to 19 April 2013, from 2 to 13 September 2013 and from 31 March to 11 April 2014. At its eleventh session, the Committee adopted its first two general comments: No. 1 on article 12 (Equal recognition before the law)

and No. 2 on article 9 (Accessibility). In general comment No. 1, it reaffirmed that persons with disabilities, including those with severe mental impairments, were entitled to exercise their legal capacity. In general comment No. 2, it provided a broad overview of what accessibility meant in practice, in particular accessibility beyond issues of physical accessibility, such as accessibility of information, communications, technologies and social services. It also dealt with the obligation of progressive realization of States parties in respect of accessibility, including the "strict application" of universal design to all new goods, products, facilities and technologies.

10. The Committee on Enforced Disappearances held its fifth session from 4 to 15 November 2013 and its sixth session from 17 to 28 March 2014. At its fifth session, the Committee issued a statement on the *ratione temporis* element in the review of reports submitted by States parties (article 35 of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance), in which it observed that isolated cases of enforced disappearances that began before the entry into force of the Convention for the State party concerned were outside its competence. The Committee clarified, however, that, when examining reports, it would look into events occurring before entry into force that might have an impact on the current obligations of the State party concerned, such as the obligations to investigate, prosecute and provide reparation, in addition to the right to the truth. At its sixth session, the Committee held a public thematic discussion on enforced disappearance and military justice.

## B. Twenty-fifth meeting of Chairs of human rights treaty bodies

11. The twenty-fifth meeting of Chairs of human rights treaty bodies was held in New York from 20 to 24 May 2013, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/202. It was convened in New York with a view to enhancing synergies with the intergovernmental process on the strengthening of the treaty bodies. The Chairs considered the follow-up to the recommendations made at the previous meeting and reviewed developments, including the implementation by treaty bodies of the recommendations contained in the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the strengthening of the treaty bodies (A/66/860). They met the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental process on the strengthening of the treaty bodies and held informal consultations with Member States, as well as with groups of States, and with civil society organizations and the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions. They also adopted decisions and recommendations and a joint statement on the post-2015 development agenda. The report of the Chairs, including the decisions and recommendations and the joint statement, is contained in the note by the Secretary-General on the implementation of human rights instruments (A/68/334).

12. Some of the more pertinent decisions and recommendations of the Chairs included the endorsement of the following five key principles to be taken into account in the intergovernmental process on treaty body strengthening: strengthened human rights protection, independence of treaty body members, sustainable response to the challenges faced by the treaty body system, reinvestment of any cost savings in and proper funding from the regular budget of the treaty body system, and use of modern technologies to enhance the accessibility of treaty bodies, including for persons with disabilities. The Chairs welcomed the report of the

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on treaty body strengthening and reaffirmed their commitment to promoting the implementation of the recommendations contained therein. They recommended that each treaty body should keep the Chairs informed on an annual basis about the progress made. The Chairs, emphasizing that the treaty bodies were committed to continuing to align their working methods, recommended that they should, at their next meeting, discuss, among other things, a common format for concluding observations and a possible alignment of the methodology for the interactive dialogue with States parties.

13. The Chairs noted that most treaty bodies had already completed action on the Addis Ababa guidelines by incorporating them into their respective rules of procedure. They decided to continue to exchange views on the practice that would develop over time regarding the guidelines.

14. The Chairs reaffirmed their previously recognized role during the period between sessions in facilitating representation and coordination of common activities such as consideration and adoption of joint statements, while noting that the autonomy and specificity of the treaty bodies must be respected. They also reiterated the recommendation that they should adopt measures on those working methods and procedural matters that were common across the treaty body system and had previously been discussed within each committee, and that such measures would be implemented by all the treaty bodies unless a committee subsequently dissociated itself from them.

15. After consulting stakeholders, the Chairs considered and adopted a joint statement relating to the need to incorporate human rights into the post-2015 development agenda (A/68/334, annex).

16. The Chairs decided that, in accordance with the principle of rotation and inclusion of new committees in the list, the Chair-Rapporteur of the twenty-sixth meeting, in 2014, would be the Chair of the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Vice-Chair would be the Chair of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances.

## C. Treaty body strengthening

17. The treaty body strengthening process was initiated in 2009 by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, who called upon all stakeholders to reflect on ways to strengthen the treaty body system. Various consultations were organized by stakeholders in direct response to that call. Consultations for States parties were organized in Geneva on 7 and 8 February 2012 and in New York on 2 and 3 April 2012.

18. In June 2012, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights submitted a report compiling the proposals made during the consultation process (A/66/860).

19. On 23 February 2012, the General Assembly, in its resolution 66/254, launched an open-ended intergovernmental process to strengthen and enhance the effective functioning of the treaty body system, which, on 17 September 2012, it extended to its sixty-seventh session (see resolution 66/295). The President of the Assembly

appointed the Permanent Representatives of Indonesia and Iceland to the United Nations in New York as co-facilitators of the process.

20. During the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the co-facilitators held informal meetings and numerous bilateral consultations with Member States. At their request, the twenty-fifth meeting of Chairs of human rights treaty bodies was held in New York to provide an opportunity for both the co-facilitators and Member States to discuss the process with the Chairs. On 20 and 24 May, the Chairs met the co-facilitators.

21. On the basis of their consultations with Member States and other stakeholders, the co-facilitators submitted their report on the process (A/67/995) to the President of the General Assembly, indicating that more time was required to finalize the outcome. A list of draft elements for a draft resolution on the process to be adopted by the Assembly was annexed to the report.

22. On 20 September 2013, the General Assembly, in its resolution 68/2, extended the process until the first half of February 2014, in order to finalize the elaboration of an outcome, and requested the Secretary-General to provide, by 15 November 2013, a comprehensive and detailed cost assessment of the proposals contained in the co-facilitators' draft resolution to provide background context to support the process.

23. On 6 November 2013, the President of the General Assembly appointed the Permanent Representatives of Iceland and Tunisia as co-facilitators of the process. On 15 November 2013, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, on behalf of the Secretary-General, submitted a background paper containing the cost assessment (A/68/606) to the President of the Assembly.

24. In January and early February 2014, the co-facilitators held final rounds of consultations with Member States in New York. On 12 February 2014, the Third Committee of the General Assembly adopted a resolution on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system, which was subsequently approved by the Fifth Committee and adopted by the Assembly on 9 April 2014 as resolution 68/268. In that resolution, the Assembly, among other things, allocated additional meeting time and financial and human resources to the treaty bodies; encouraged them to implement the Addis Ababa guidelines; provided for capacity-building to support States parties to implement their treaty obligations, in particular their reporting obligations; requested the Secretary-General to ensure the progressive implementation of accessibility standards with regard to the treaty body system and to provide reasonable accommodation for treaty body experts with disabilities; decided to establish webcasting of public meetings of treaty bodies, as soon as feasible; and requested United Nations country teams and OHCHR to provide, at the request of a State party, the opportunity for members of its delegation to participate in the consideration of the report of that State party by means of videoconferencing. The Assembly further invited the treaty bodies to continue to align their working methods and to strengthen the role of treaty body Chairs, with a view to accelerating the harmonization of the treaty body system.

25. At its fifty-fifth and fifty-sixth sessions, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women was informed about the status, and at the fifty-seventh session about the outcome, of the above-mentioned process. The most salient measures taken by the Committee to streamline its working methods and

increase efficiency include establishment of country task forces for the examination of reports of States parties, clustering by themes of questions asked during the dialogue, reduction of the number and length of standard paragraphs in its concluding observations, use of a template with subject headings for concluding observations, issuance of summary records only in English and public webcasting of its dialogues with States parties.

## D. Security Council

26. The Security Council adopted various resolutions in which it emphasized the importance of women's participation in public and political life, in particular during conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations. For example, in its resolution 2149 (2014), it requested the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic to assist the Government in ensuring the full and effective participation, involvement and representation of women in all spheres and at all levels, including in stabilization activities, security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and repatriation processes, as well as in the national political dialogue and electoral processes. In its resolution 2147 (2014) on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council called upon all actors to ensure the equal and full inclusion of women in the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region and at all stages of conflict resolution, reconstruction and the promotion of peacebuilding.

27. In its resolution 2117 (2013) on small arms and light weapons, the Security Council urged Member States, United Nations entities and intergovernmental, regional and subregional organizations to take further measures to facilitate women's full and meaningful participation in all policymaking, planning and implementation processes to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons. It called upon all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and justice and security sector reform efforts to take into account the particular needs of women and children associated with armed forces and armed groups, with the participation of women, and to provide for their full access to those programmes, among other things, through consultation with civil society, including women's organizations, as appropriate.

28. The Security Council also adopted two resolutions relating to its agenda on women and peace and security. In its resolution 2122 (2013), the Council recognized the need for more systematic attention to the implementation of women and peace and security commitments in its own work. In preparation for the high-level review in 2015 to assess progress at the global, regional and national levels in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, it invited the Secretary-General to commission a global study on the implementation of that resolution and to submit it as part of his annual report to the Council in 2015. In its resolution 2106 (2013), the Council requested the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations entities to accelerate the establishment and implementation of monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence, including rape, in situations of armed conflict and post-conflict and other situations relevant to the implementation of resolution 1888 (2009), as appropriate, and taking into account the specificity of each country. The Council also called for the further

deployment of women protection advisers, in accordance with resolution 1888 (2009), to facilitate the implementation of its resolutions on women and peace and security.

29. In its resolution 2145 (2014) on the situation in Afghanistan, the Security Council requested the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan to continue to assist the Government in the full implementation of the fundamental freedoms and human rights provisions of the Constitution and international treaties to which Afghanistan was a party, in particular those regarding the full enjoyment by women of their human rights, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Previously, in its resolution 2120 (2013), the Council had welcomed the presentation by the Government of its initial report on the implementation of the Convention to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

30. The Security Council also adopted numerous country-specific resolutions making reference to, among other things, gender equality, gender-based discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence and impunity and justice and the protection of human rights, with a special focus on the rights of women and children.[1]

## E. General Assembly

31. In its resolution 68/233 on agriculture development, food security and nutrition, the General Assembly called upon Member States to close the gender gap in access to productive resources in agriculture, noting with concern that the gender gap persisted for many assets, inputs and services. It stressed the need to invest in and strengthen efforts to empower women, in particular rural women, as well as to address their own food and nutritional needs and those of their families, and to promote adequate standards of living for them, as well as decent conditions for work and access to local, regional and global markets. In its resolution 68/227 on women in development, the Assembly stressed the importance of the creation by Member States, international organizations, including the United Nations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders of a favourable and conducive national and international environment in all areas of life for the effective integration of women and girls in development. It urged Member States to incorporate a gender perspective, commensurate with gender-equality goals, into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and reporting of national development strategies, to ensure alignment between national action plans on gender equality and national development strategies and to encourage the involvement of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality.

32. In its resolution 68/148 on child, early and forced marriage, the General Assembly decided to convene, during its sixty-eighth session, a panel discussion on child, early and forced marriage worldwide and to consider the issue at its sixty-ninth session under the item entitled "Promotion and protection of the rights of children", taking into account the multifaceted and worldwide nature of the issue.

[1] For example, see Security Council resolutions 2098 (2013) on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2100 (2013) on the situation in Mali, 2109 (2013) on the situation in South Sudan, 2112 (2013) on the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, 2113 (2013) on the situation in the Sudan and 2147 (2014) on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

33. In its resolution 68/137 on violence against women migrant workers, the General Assembly encouraged States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to take note of and consider the Committee's general recommendation No. 26 on women migrant workers when addressing the issue of women migrant workers. It urged Governments to enhance bilateral, regional, interregional and international cooperation to address violence against women migrant workers, as well as to strengthen efforts to reduce the vulnerability of women migrant workers by facilitating their access to justice and by taking effective action in the areas of law enforcement, prosecution, prevention, capacity-building and victim protection and support, by exchanging information and good practices in combating violence and discrimination against women migrant workers and by fostering sustainable development alternatives to migration in countries of origin.

34. In its resolution 68/191 on taking action against gender-related killing of women and girls, the General Assembly reaffirmed that discrimination on the basis of sex was contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other international human rights instruments and that the elimination of such discrimination was an integral part of efforts towards eliminating all forms of violence against women. It urged Member States to consider undertaking institutional initiatives to improve the prevention of gender-related killings of women and girls and the provision of legal protection, including appropriate remedies, reparation and compensation, to victims of such crimes, in accordance with applicable national and international law. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene an open-ended intergovernmental expert group meeting to discuss ways and means to more effectively prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish gender-related killings of women and girls, with a view to making practical recommendations, drawing also on current best practices, in consultation with relevant United Nations entities and human rights mechanisms.

35. In its resolution 68/139 on the improvement of the situation of women in rural areas, the General Assembly called upon Member States to consider the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning their reports to the Committee when formulating policies and designing programmes for the improvement of the situation of rural women, including those to be developed and implemented in cooperation with relevant international organizations. It invited States to promote the economic empowerment of rural women, including through entrepreneurship training, and to adopt gender-responsive rural development strategies.

36. In its resolution 68/33 on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, the General Assembly recognized the valuable contribution of women to practical disarmament measures and urged Member States to support and strengthen women's effective participation in the field of disarmament at the local, national, subregional and regional levels, in particular as it related to the prevention and reduction of armed violence and armed conflict. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on ways and means of promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control and to report to the Assembly at its sixty-ninth session on the implementation of the resolution.

## F. Human Rights Council

37. In September 2013, the Human Rights Council adopted resolution 24/23 on strengthening efforts to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage. The Council expressed deep concern about the widespread practice of child, early and forced marriage in all regions of the world and recognized that it constituted a violation, abuse or impairment of human rights. It decided to convene a high-level panel discussion at its twenty-sixth session, in June 2014, on preventing and eliminating child, early and forced marriage, with a particular focus on challenges, achievements, best practices and implementation gaps. It requested OHCHR to prepare a report on preventing and eliminating child, early and forced marriage to guide the panel discussion.

38. During the twenty-third session of the Human Rights Council, in June 2013, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, presented a thematic report on State responsibility for eliminating violence against women (A/HRC/23/49).

39. Also during that session, the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice presented its first thematic report to the Human Rights Council. The report records current achievements in women's political representation and articulates remaining challenges to women's equal, full and effective participation in political and public life, including in times of political transition.

40. In its resolution 23/25 on accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, the Human Rights Council strongly condemned all acts of violence against women and girls, whether perpetrated by the State, private persons or non-State actors. It underlined that, in situations of peaceful protest, civil unrest, public emergency or political transition, States must continue to take all measures necessary to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, in particular rape and other forms of sexual violence, and must ensure that such acts, whether or not committed by State or non-State actors in the course of achieving political or military objectives or as a means of intimidation or repression, are promptly and effectively investigated and prosecuted. The Council took note of the efforts to develop a non-binding international protocol on the investigation and documentation of sexual violence in conflict. It invited OHCHR to include, during the annual full-day discussion on women's human rights to be held during the twenty-ninth session of the Council, in June 2015, a discussion on the outcome of the meeting of the open-ended intergovernmental expert group to be convened by the Secretary-General in 2014 on ways and means to more effectively prevent, prosecute and punish gender-related killings of women and girls.

41. In its resolution 23/5 on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, the Human Rights Council encouraged businesses to commit themselves to implementing the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; establish an effective monitoring system, such as social audits, to scrutinize the risks of human trafficking at all levels of the supply chain; conduct a risk assessment for their entire supply chain; and develop and adopt high-level, company-wide policies or strategies to eliminate risks of trafficking in persons in their supply chains.

42. The Human Rights Council also adopted resolution 23/2 on the role of freedom of opinion and expression in women's empowerment, reaffirming that

active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making, was essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy. It called upon States to ensure that women and girls exercising their right to freedom of opinion and expression were not discriminated against, in particular in employment, housing, the justice system, social services and education.

43. Also at its twenty-third session, the Human Rights Council devoted its annual discussion on women's human rights to the progress made in the elimination of violence against women over the past 20 years, with a view to identifying remaining gaps and emerging challenges to inform the agenda of the Council and that of the international community.

# III. Working methods of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

## A. Working methods

44. At its fifty-fifth session, the Committee adopted two statements: one on women in the process of political transition in Egypt, Libya and Tunisia and one on strengthened cooperation with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (A/69/38, part one, annexes I and II). The Committee also decided to transform the focal point on the Entity into a standing working group and entrusted it with the elaboration of a joint action plan for 2014-2015.

45. At its fifty-sixth session, the Committee decided to continue the practice of publicly webcasting its dialogues with States parties and other public meetings beyond an initial trial period (A/69/38, part two, annex I).

46. At its fifty-seventh session, the Committee decided to entrust the working group on working methods with the task of reviewing the rules of procedure of the Committee, with a view to proposing amendments in order to incorporate into the rules of procedure recent decisions of the Committee on its methods of work and new provisions operationalizing the Addis Ababa guidelines and integrating the outcome of the intergovernmental process on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system. The Committee also adopted two statements: one on the post-2015 development agenda and the elimination of discrimination against women and one on women's sexual and reproductive health and rights (A/69/38, part three, annexes I and II).

## B. Concluding observations

47. At its fifty-sixth session, the Committee decided to shorten the standard paragraph on national parliaments in its concluding observations.

## C. Follow-up

48. At its fifty-sixth session, the Committee adopted the assessment of the follow-up procedure presented by the Rapporteur on follow-up to concluding observations,

Barbara Bailey (A/69/38, part two, annex VI). She recommended that the follow-up procedure under article 18 of the Convention should be continued and that the next evaluation process should be carried out at the sixty-fifth session of the Committee, in October 2016. The Committee decided to extend the term of Ms. Bailey as Rapporteur on follow-up to concluding observations to ensure continuity and to appoint Ms. Xiaoqiao Zou as an alternate, both for one year, until 31 December 2014.

## D. Communications

49. Concerning individual communications submitted under article 2 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention, the Committee adopted final decisions with regard to three communications at its fifty-fifth session, two communications at its fifty-sixth session and three communications at its fifty-seventh session.

## E. General recommendations

50. At its fifty-sixth session, the Committee adopted general recommendation No. 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations (CEDAW/C/GC/30) unanimously by roll-call vote, in accordance with rules 31 (2), 32 (2) and 34 of its rules of procedure, having completed the first reading at its fifty-fifth session.

51. At its fifty-seventh session, the Committee decided to establish a task force on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations.

52. Currently, the Committee is working on several general recommendations:

(a) *Draft joint Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/Committee on the Rights of the Child general recommendation/comment on harmful practices*. During the fifty-fifth session, the working group on harmful practices revised the draft general recommendation/comment. At the fifty-sixth session, the joint working group of the two committees held an informal meeting to finalize the draft general recommendation/comment. At the fifty-seventh session, the working group on harmful practices revised an updated version of the draft;

(b) *Draft general recommendation on women and access to justice*. During the fifty-seventh session, the working group on women and access to justice discussed a first draft of the general recommendation and decided to circulate the finalized draft to the other members of the Committee and to stakeholders between sessions;

(c) *Draft general recommendation on gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum and statelessness*. At its fifty-sixth session, the Committee discussed the draft general recommendation, in the presence of two representatives of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. At its fifty-seventh session, the Committee discussed the second part of the draft general recommendation, dealing with nationality and statelessness;

(d) *Draft general recommendation on gender equality in the context of climate change and natural disasters*. At the fifty-seventh session, the working group on gender equality in the context of climate change and natural disasters

discussed an outline of the concept note, in the presence of representatives of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction;

(e) *Draft general recommendation on rural women*. At its fifty-sixth session, the Committee held a half-day of general discussion on rural women, as part of the first phase in the elaboration of a general recommendation on the topic. At the fifty-seventh session, the working group endorsed an outline of the draft general recommendation;

(f) *Draft general recommendation on the right to education*. During the fifty-fifth session, the working group on the right to education held a telephone conference to discuss a concept note on the topic. At its fifty-sixth session, the Committee decided to hold a half-day of general discussion on the subject during its fifty-eighth session. At its fifty-seventh session, the Committee endorsed the concept note prepared by the working group.

### F. Inquiries

53. At its fifty-fifth session, the Committee adopted its findings, comments and recommendations in relation to inquiry No. 2010/1 and decided to transmit them to the State party concerned. At its fifty-sixth session, the Committee received a briefing from the experts designated to conduct inquiry No. 2011/1 on a visit that they had undertaken to the territory of the State party concerned. At its fifty-seventh session, the Committee decided to include a summary of its activities in relation to inquiry No. 2010/1 in its annual report to the General Assembly, in accordance with article 12 of the Optional Protocol.

## IV. Reports to be considered by the Committee at future sessions

54. States parties' reports have been scheduled up to and including the sixty-first session, to be held in June/July 2015. The secretariat has sent out notes verbales requesting the States parties concerned to confirm their attendance at the sessions at which they are scheduled. In addition to preferences by the States parties, the secretariat gives due consideration to geographic distribution and gives priority to initial reports, where possible. It is important to note that Member States and other strategic partners have commented favourably on the advanced scheduling of States parties before the Committee, which allows adequate time for preparing for the constructive dialogues between the States parties concerned and the Committee. It also provides adequate notice for other stakeholders to provide input to the reporting process. The following States parties are scheduled for the fifty-eighth session, in June/July 2014: Central African Republic, Georgia, India, Lithuania, Mauritania, Peru, Swaziland and Syrian Arab Republic. The following States parties are scheduled for the fifty-ninth session, to be held in October/November 2014: Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, China, Ghana, Guinea, Poland, Solomon Islands and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). The following States parties are scheduled for the sixtieth session, to be held in February 2015: Azerbaijan, Denmark, Ecuador, Eritrea, Gabon, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives and Tuvalu. The following States parties are scheduled for the sixty-first session, to be held in June/July 2015: Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Croatia, Gambia, Madagascar, Namibia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Spain and Viet Nam.

# Annex I

## States that have not ratified or acceded to the Convention

### Africa

Somalia
South Sudan
Sudan

### Asia and the Pacific

Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Niue
Palau (signed on 20 September 2011)
Tonga

### Western Europe and other

Holy See
United States of America (signed on 17 July 1980)

# Annex II

## States parties whose reports have been submitted but not yet scheduled as at 1 May 2014

| *State party* | *Date due* | *Date received* | *Previously considered (session)* | *Previous report(s)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **France** | | | | |
| Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports | 13 January 2013 | 14 February 2012 | 2008 (40) | 17 March 2006 (sixth periodic report) |
| **Lebanon** | | | | |
| Combined fourth and fifth periodic reports | 16 May 2014 | 25 April 2014 | 2008 (40) | 6 July 2006 (third periodic report) |
| **Liberia** | | | | |
| Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports | 16 August 2013 | 17 March 2014 | 2009 (44) | 30 September 2008 (combined initial to sixth periodic reports) |
| **Madagascar** | | | | |
| Combined sixth and seventh periodic reports | 16 April 2014 | 24 January 2014 | 2008 (42) | 13 August 2007 (combined second to fifth periodic reports) |
| **Portugal** | | | | |
| Combined eighth and ninth periodic reports | 18 October 2013 | 30 July 2013 | 2008 (42) | 15 May 2006 and 28 January 2008 (sixth and seventh periodic reports) |
| **Timor-Leste** | | | | |
| Combined second and third periodic reports | 16 May 2013 | 17 September 2013 | 2009 (44) | 22 April 2008 (initial report) |
| **Uzbekistan** | | | | |
| Fifth periodic report | February 2014 | 28 February 2014 | 2010 (45) | 19 July 2008 (fourth periodic report) |
| **Yemen** | | | | |
| Combined seventh and eighth periodic reports | 29 June 2013 | 5 July 2013 | 2008 (41) | 5 December 2006 (sixth periodic report) |